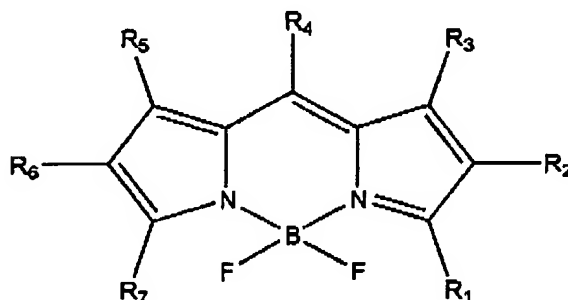


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### AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete listing of the claims.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of labeling poly(amino acids) comprising the steps of:
  - a. separating poly(amino acids) by gel electrophoresis, resulting in separated poly (amino acids);
  - b. transferring said separated poly(amino acids) to a solid support, resulting in immobilized poly(amino acids) ;
  - c. combining said immobilized poly(amino acids) on said solid support with a labeling mixture that comprises one or more chemically reactive dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dyes of the formula:



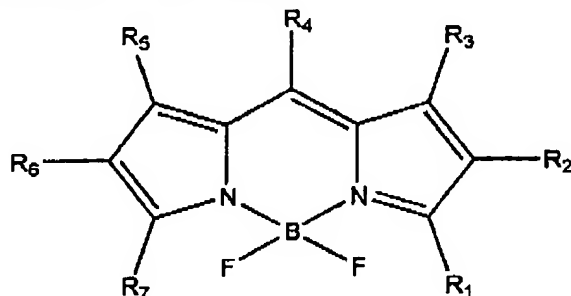
wherein each of R<sup>1</sup> through R<sup>7</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, ~~maleimide~~, ~~amine-reactive group~~, -L-Rx, substituted or unsubstituted C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub> alkyl, substituted or unsubstituted aryl, substituted or unsubstituted arylethenyl, substituted or unsubstituted arylbutadienyl, and substituted or unsubstituted heteroaryl wherein at least one of R<sup>1</sup> through R<sup>7</sup> is -L-Rx, wherein L is a spacer having 1-24 nonhydrogen atoms and Rx is a maleimide or a succinimidyl ester of a carboxylic acid ~~an amine-reactive group~~;

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- d. incubating the immobilized poly(amino acids) in the labeling mixture ~~for a~~ sufficient time for the chemically reactive dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dyes to form a covalent bond with said poly(amino acids), resulting in labeled poly(amino acids).
2. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein ~~Rx is said amine-reactive group~~ is a succinimidyl ester of a carboxylic acid.
3. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said solid support is made of solvent-resistant materials that are selected from the group consisting of nylon, poly(vinylidene difluoride), glass, plastics, and their derivatives.
4. (Previously Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim 3, wherein said solid support is poly(vinylidene difluoride) .
5. (Cancelled).
6. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, wherein said dye is present in the labeling mixture at a concentration of about 5 micromolar to about 20 micromolar.
7. (Cancelled).
8. (Previously Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising adding a specific binding pair member that contains a label and that binds selectively to a target within the immobilized poly(amino acids) that is its complementary binding pair.
9. (Currently Amended) A method of labeling poly(amino acids) bound to aptamers comprising the steps of:
  - a. incubating immobilized aptamers with poly(amino acids) for a sufficient time to allow said poly(amino acids) to bind to their specific aptamers, resulting in immobilized poly(amino acids);

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- b. removing unbound poly(amino acids) that are not immobilized,
- c. combining said immobilized poly(amino acids) with a labeling mixture ~~that~~ comprises one or more chemically reactive dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dyes of the formula:



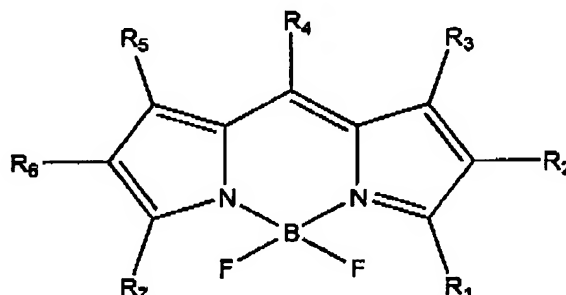
wherein each of R<sup>1</sup> through R<sup>7</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, ~~-L-Rx~~, ~~maleimide~~, ~~amine-reactive group~~, substituted or unsubstituted C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub> alkyl, substituted or unsubstituted aryl, substituted or unsubstituted arylethenyl, substituted or unsubstituted arylbutadienyl, and substituted or unsubstituted heteroaryl; provided that at least one of R<sup>1</sup> through R<sup>7</sup> is -L-Rx, wherein L is a spacer having 1-24 nonhydrogen atoms and Rx is a maleimide or a succinimidyl ester of a carboxylic acid ~~an amine-reactive group~~;

- d. incubating the immobilized poly(amino acids) with the labeling mixture for a sufficient time to form a covalent bond between the chemically reactive dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye and said immobilized poly(amino acids), resulting in labeled poly(amino acids) that are bound to the aptamers.
10. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim 9, wherein ~~said amine-reactive group~~ Rx is a succinimidyl ester of a carboxylic acid.
  11. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim ~~[[10]]~~ 9, wherein said dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye is present in the labeling mixture at a

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concentration of about 5 micromolar to about 20 micromolar.

12. (Cancelled)
13. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim [[12]] 9, further comprising adding a specific binding pair member that contains a label and that binds selectively to a target within the immobilized poly(amino acids) that is its complementary binding pair.
14. (Currently Amended) A method of labeling immobilized poly(amino acids) in an array comprising the steps of:
  - a. combining an array of immobilized poly(amino acids) with a labeling mixture that comprises one or more chemically reactive dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dyes of the formula



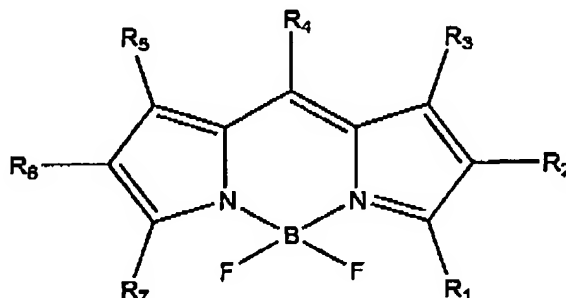
wherein each of R<sup>1</sup> through R<sup>7</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, ~~-L-Rx~~, ~~maleimide~~, ~~amino reactive group~~, substituted or unsubstituted C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, substituted or unsubstituted aryl, substituted or unsubstituted arylethenyl, substituted or unsubstituted arylbutadienyl, and substituted or unsubstituted heteroaryl; provided that at least one of R<sup>1</sup> through R<sup>7</sup> is -L-Rx, wherein L is a spacer having 1-24 nonhydrogen atoms and Rx is a maleimide or a succinimidyl ester of a carboxylic acid ~~an amino reactive group~~;

- b. incubating said array with the labeling mixture for a sufficient time to form a covalent bond between the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye and

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said immobilized poly(amino acids), resulting in the array of poly(amino acids) being labeled.

15. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim 14, wherein Rx said-amine-reactive-group is a succinimidyl ester of a carboxylic acid.
16. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim ~~[[15]]~~ 14, wherein said dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye is present in the labeling mixture at a concentration of about 5 micromolar to about 20 micromolar.
17. (Cancelled).
18. (Cancelled).
19. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 14, further comprising adding specific binding pair member that contains a label and that binds selectively to a target within the immobilized poly(amino acids) that is its complementary binding pair.
20. (Currently Amended) A method of detecting poly(amino acids) comprising the steps of:
  - a. combining poly(amino acids) immobilized on a solid support; with a labeling mixture that comprises one or more chemically reactive dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dyes of the formula

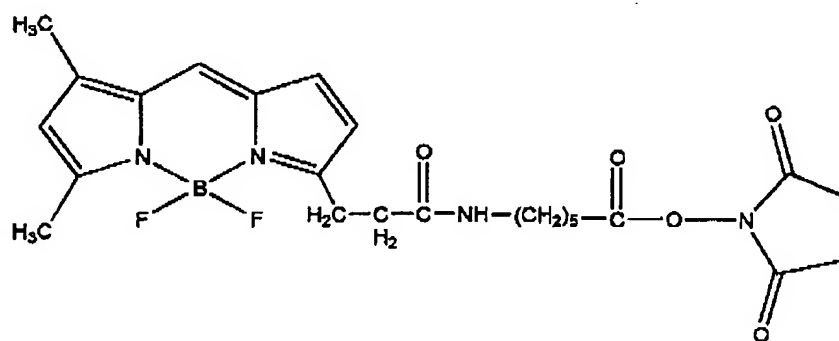


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wherein each of  $R^1$  through  $R^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, ~~maleimide, amine-reactive-group~~, substituted or unsubstituted  $C_1$ - $C_6$  alkyl, substituted or unsubstituted aryl, substituted or unsubstituted arylethenyl, substituted or unsubstituted arylbutadienyl, and substituted or unsubstituted heteroaryl;

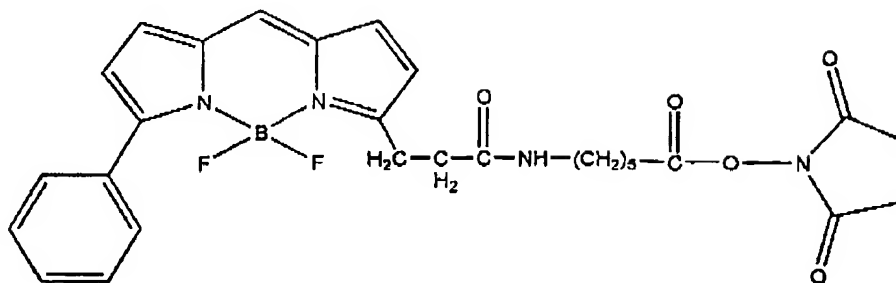
provided that at least one of  $R^1$  through  $R^7$  is  $-L-R_x$ , wherein L is a spacer having 1-24 nonhydrogen atoms and  $R_x$  is a maleimide or a succinimide ester of a carboxylic acid ~~an amine-reactive-group~~;

- b. incubating said immobilized poly(amino acids) with the labeling mixture for a sufficient time to form a covalent bond between the chemically reactive dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye and said immobilized poly(amino acids) resulting in labeled poly(amino acids);
  - c. removing unbound dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dyes;
  - d. illuminating said labeled poly(amino acids) to yield a fluorescent optical response to detect the corresponding labeled poly(amino acids).
21. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye has the formula:

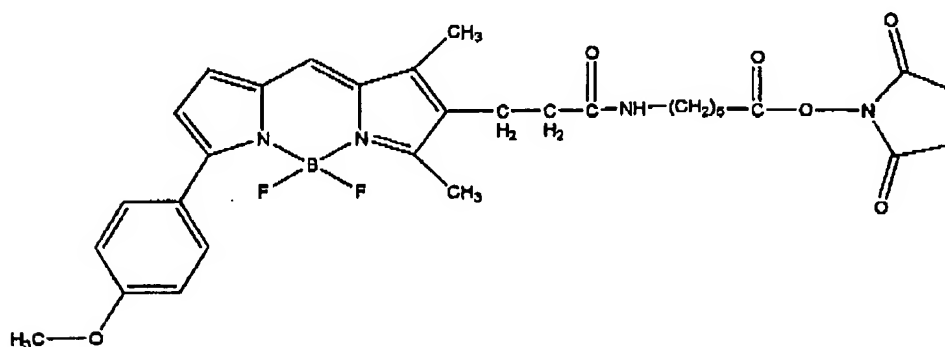


22. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye has the formula:

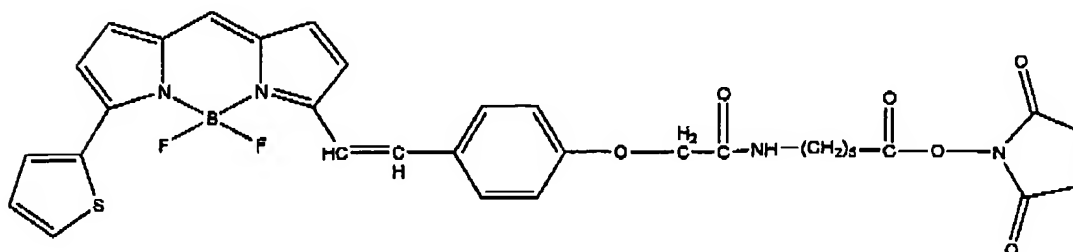
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23. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye has the formula:

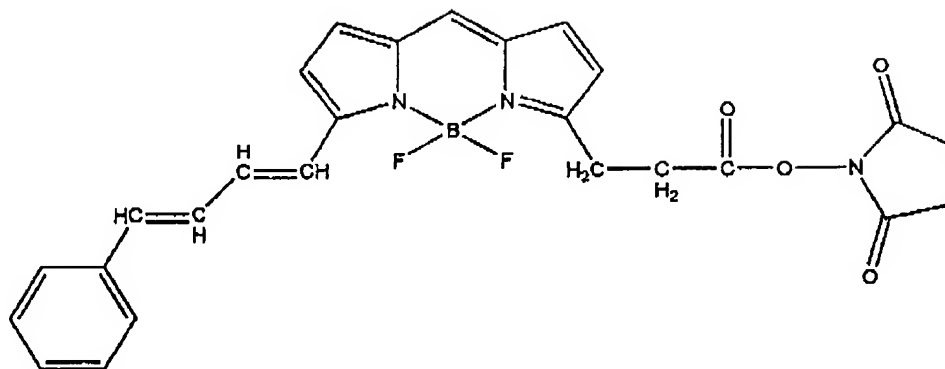


24. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye has the formula:

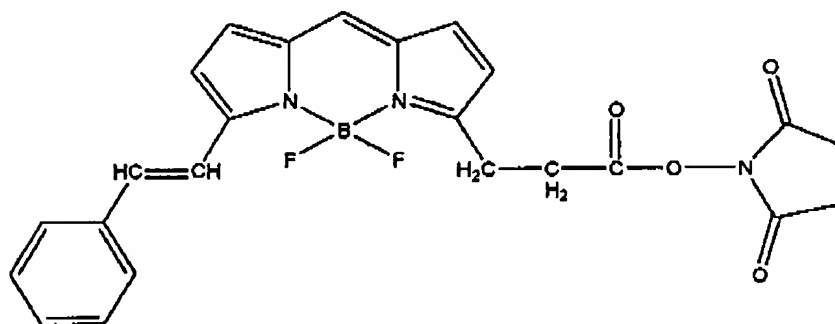


25. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye has the formula:

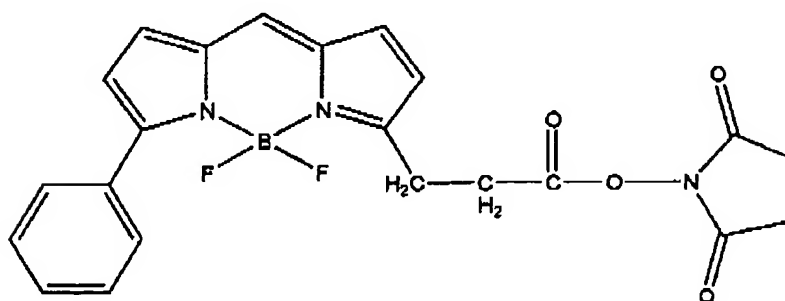
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26. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye has the formula:



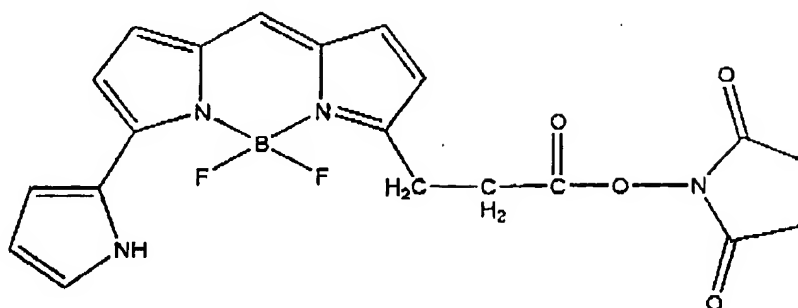
27. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye has the formula:



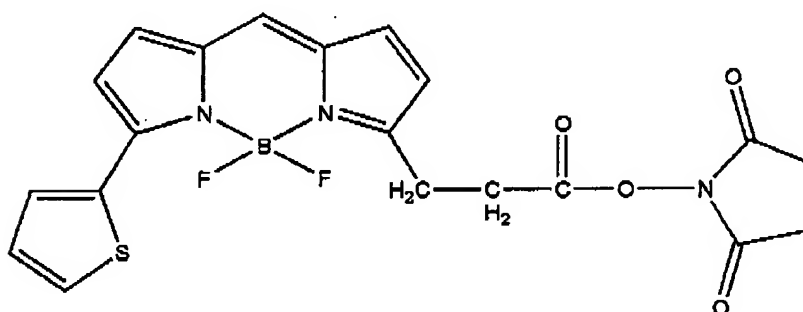
28. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye has the formula:



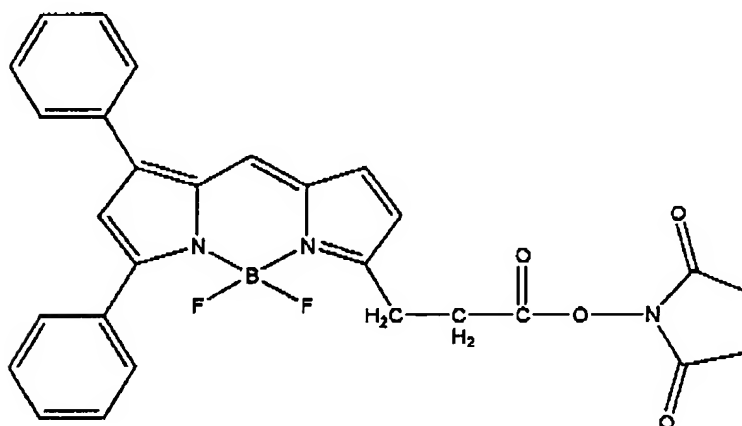
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29. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye has the formula:

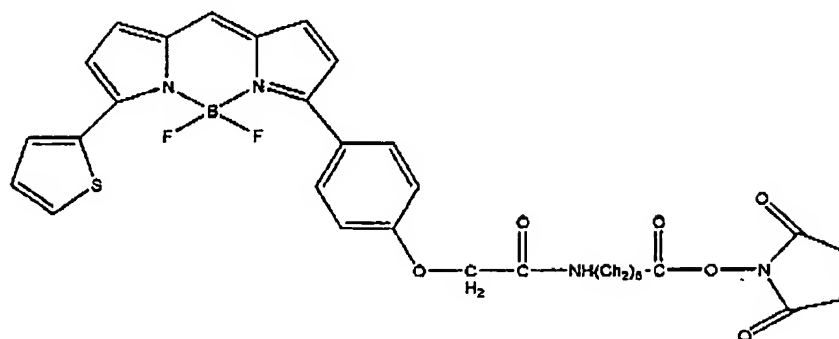


30. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye has the formula:



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31. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye has the formula:



32. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein said solid support is made of solvent-resistant materials that are selected from the group consisting of nylon, poly(vinylidene difluoride), glass, plastics, and their derivatives.
33. (Previously Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein said solid support is poly(vinylidene difluoride).
34. (Cancelled).
35. (Cancelled)
36. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim ~~[[35]]~~ 20, wherein said dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye is present in the labeling mixture at a concentration of about 5 micromolar to about 20 micromolar.
37. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 20, further comprising adding a specific binding pair member that selectively binds to a target within said immobilized poly(amino acids) that is its complementary binding pair.

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38. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 37, where said specific binding pair member contains a label that is an enzyme or a hapten.
39. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 37, where said specific binding pair member contains a label that is a fluorophore.
40. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 37, further comprising:  
adding a secondary complementary binding pair member that contains a label and that selectively binds to the specific binding pair member.
41. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 40, wherein the label on the secondary complementary binding pair is an enzyme.
42. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 40, wherein the label on the secondary complementary binding pair is a fluorescent dye.
43. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 41, wherein said enzyme is a peroxidase or a phosphatase.
44. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 43, wherein said peroxidase is horseradish peroxidase.
45. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 43 wherein said phosphatase is alkaline phosphatase.
46. (Previously Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim 41, wherein said enzyme is capable of utilizing a fluorogenic substrate to generate a detectable optical response.
47. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 46, wherein said enzyme is a peroxidase and said fluorogenic substrate is a fluorescent tyramide.
48. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 46, wherein said enzyme is a phosphatase and said fluorogenic substrate is a quinazolinone phosphate.

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49. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 46, wherein said enzyme is a phosphatase and said fluorogenic substrate is 9H-(1,3-dichloro-9,9-dimethylacridin-2-one-7-yl) phosphate.

50. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 46, wherein said enzyme is a peroxidase and said fluorogenic substrate is a polyfluorinated xanthene.

51. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 40, wherein said secondary complimentary binding pair is an antibody or an antibody fragment.

52. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 39, wherein said complementary specific binding pair member is a lectin.

53. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 39, wherein said specific binding pair member is biotin-binding protein that contains a label.

54. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said biotin-binding protein is streptavidin.

55. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 53, wherein said biotin-binding protein is NeutrAvidin.

56. (Original) A method, as claimed in Claim 37, wherein said specific binding pair member is an antibody or antibody fragment, an aptamer, a lectin, or a biotin-binding protein.

57. (Canceled).

58. (Canceled).

59. (Canceled).

60. (Canceled).

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61. (Canceled).

62. (Canceled).

63. (Canceled).

64. (Canceled).

65. (Canceled).

66. (Canceled).

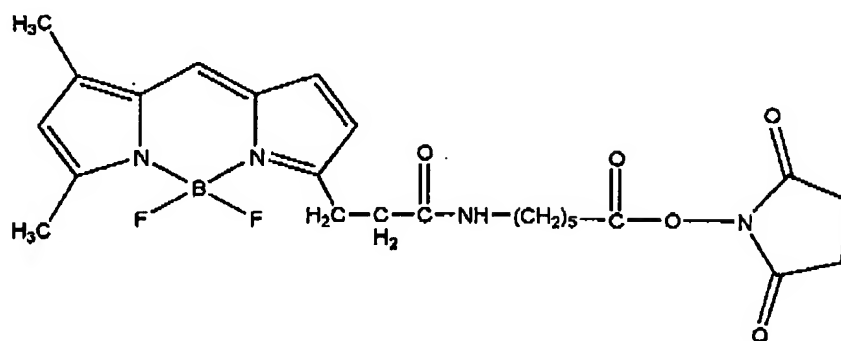
67. (Canceled).

68. (Canceled).

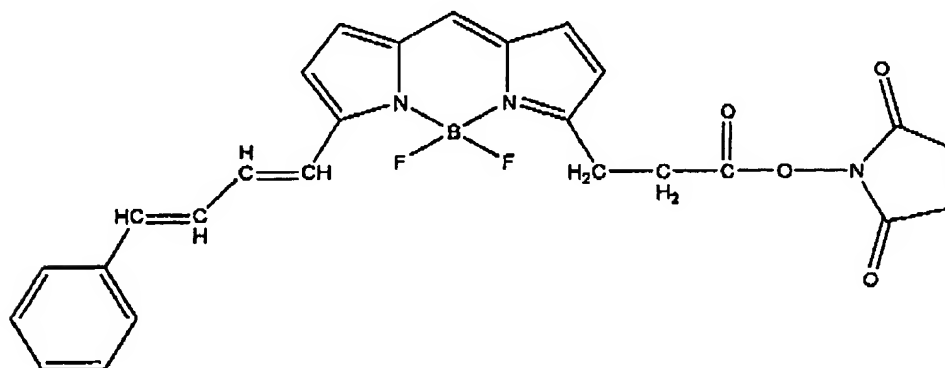
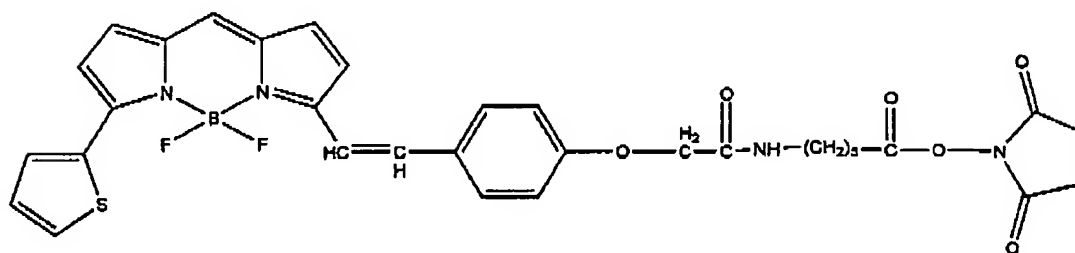
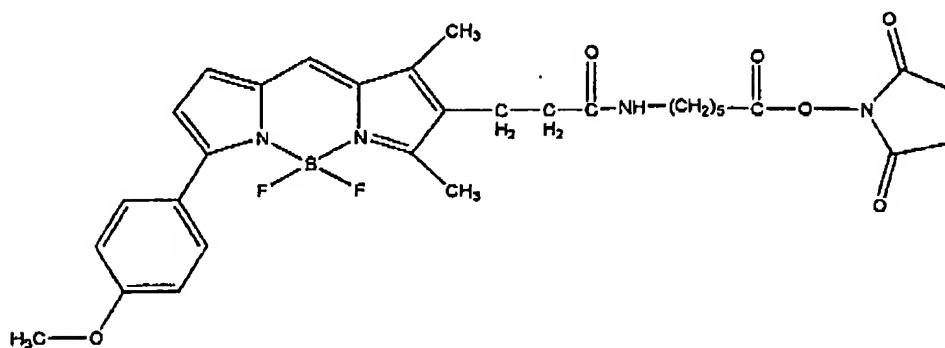
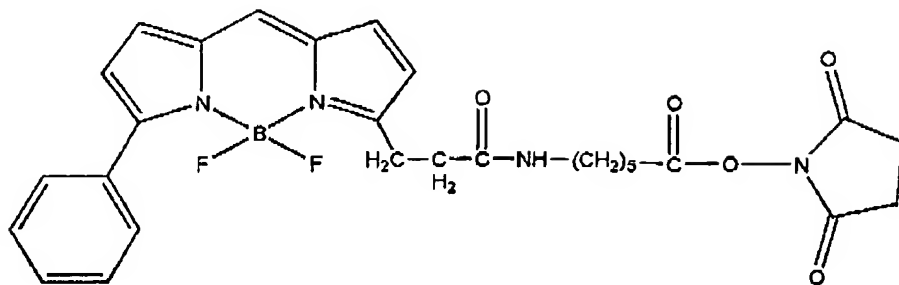
69. (Canceled).

70. (Canceled).

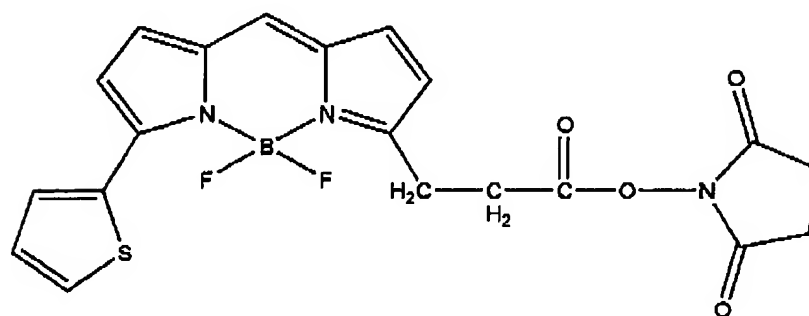
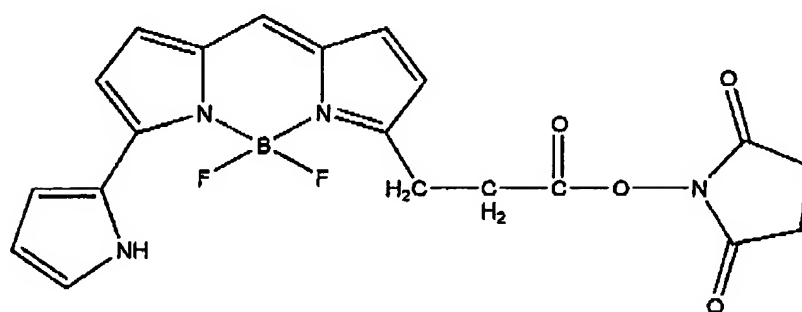
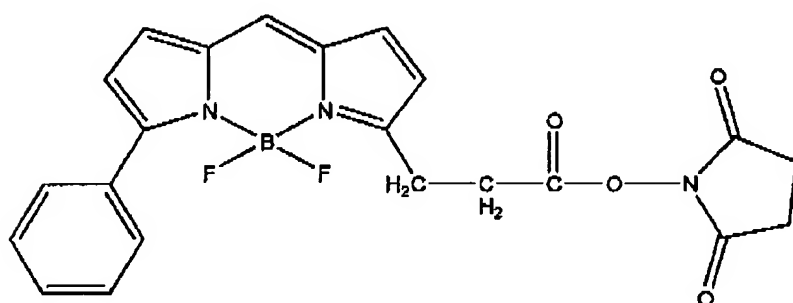
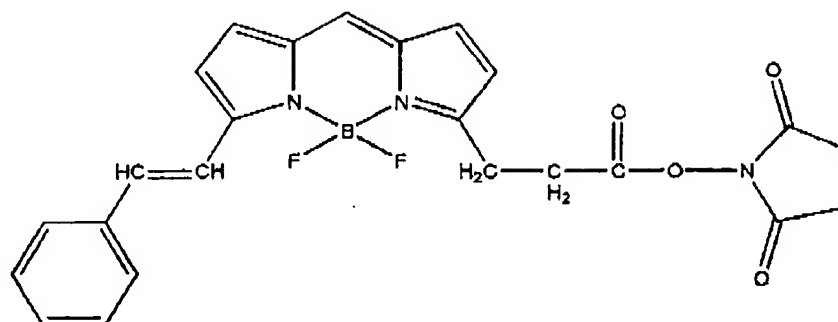
71. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim [[6]] 1, wherein said dye is selected from the group consisting of



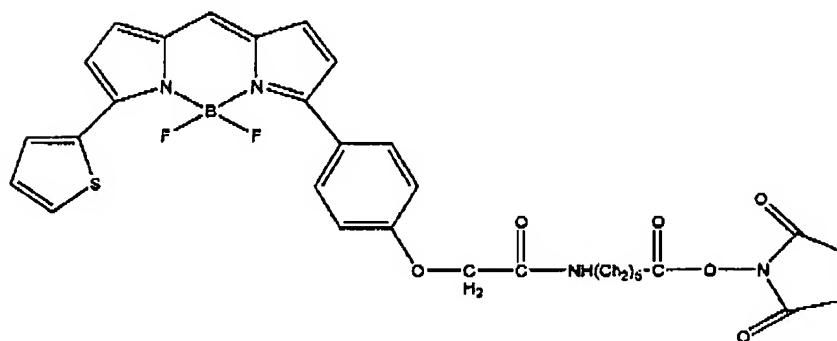
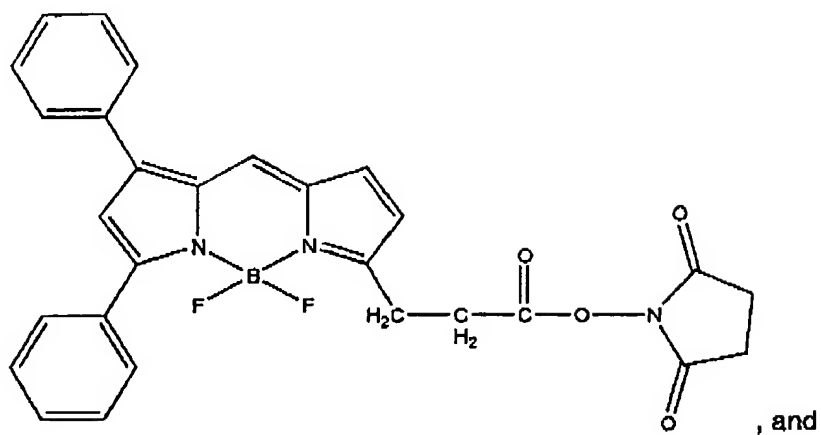
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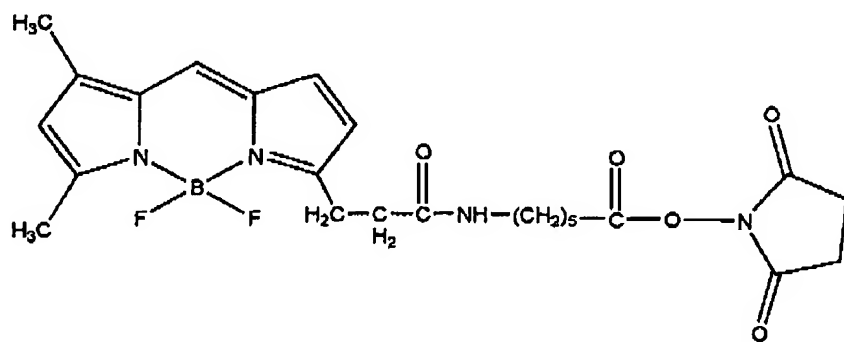
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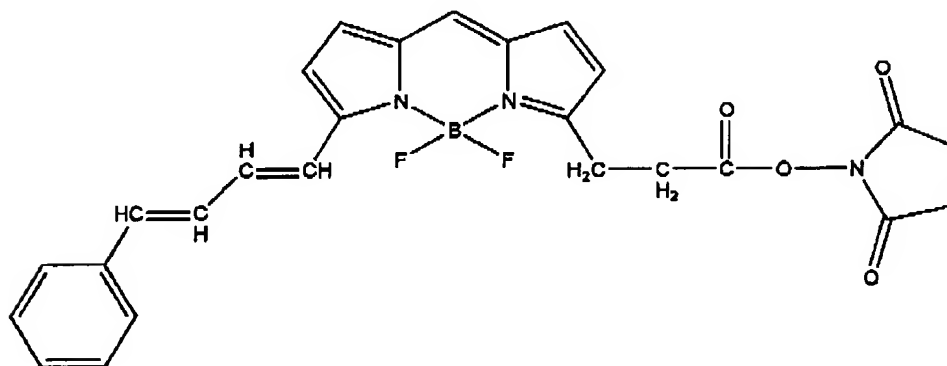
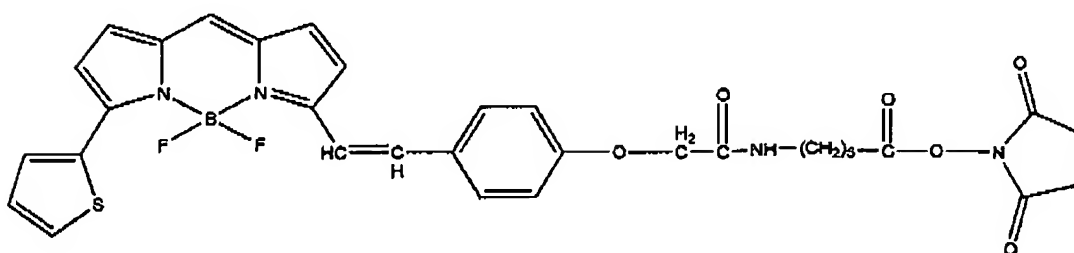
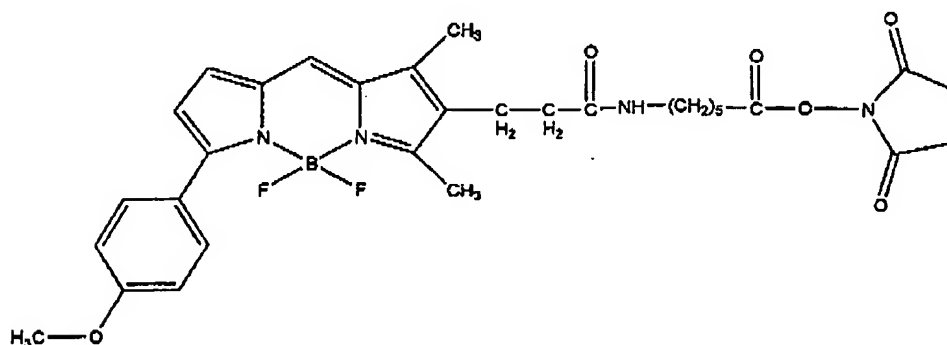
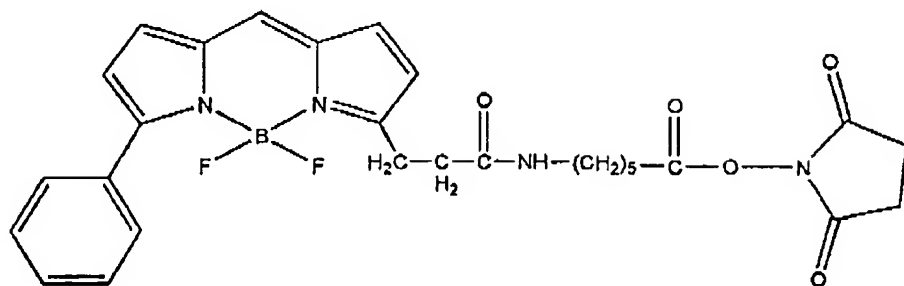


72. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim [[11]] 9, wherein said dye is selected from the group consisting of

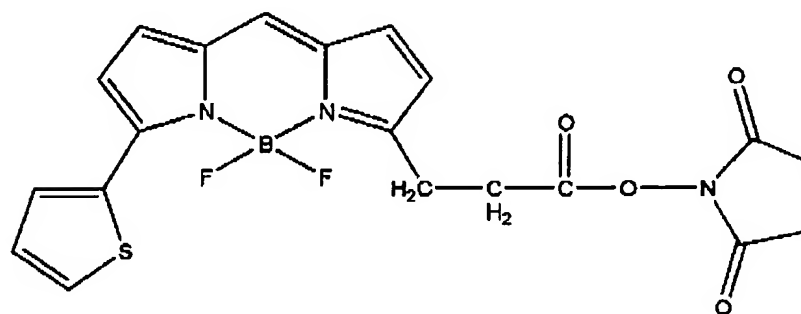
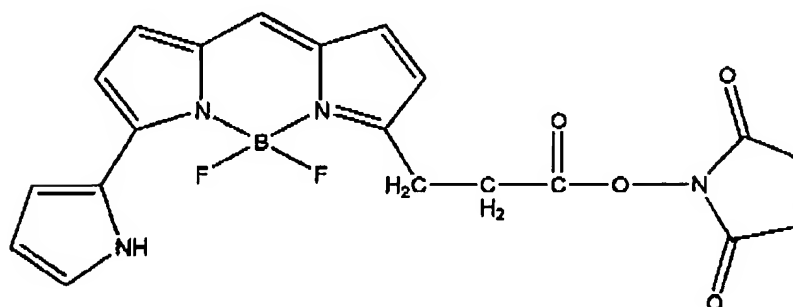
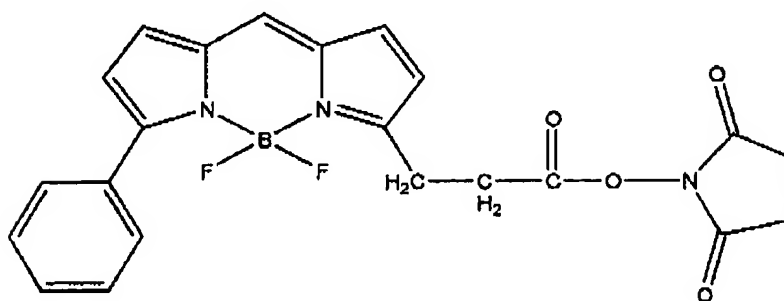
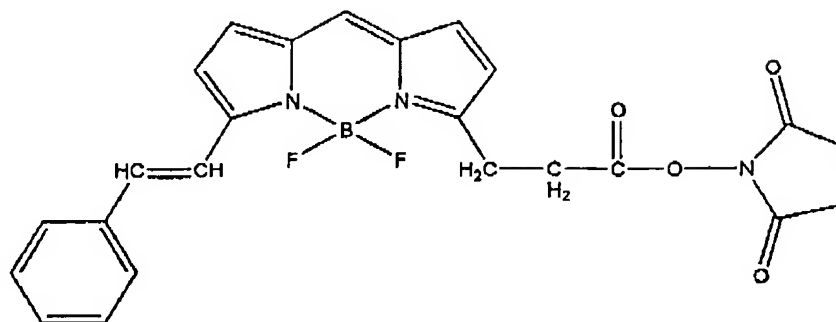




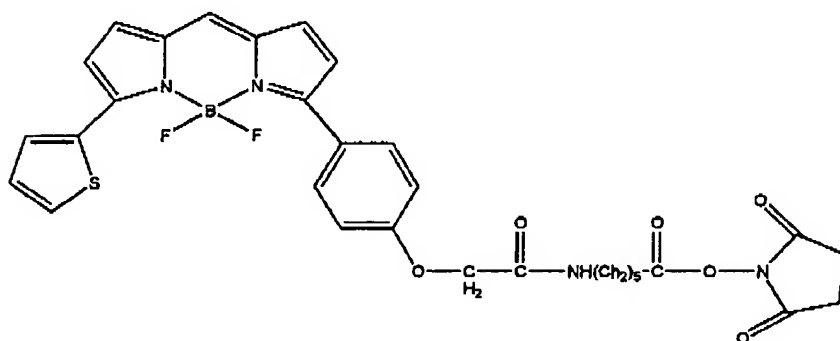
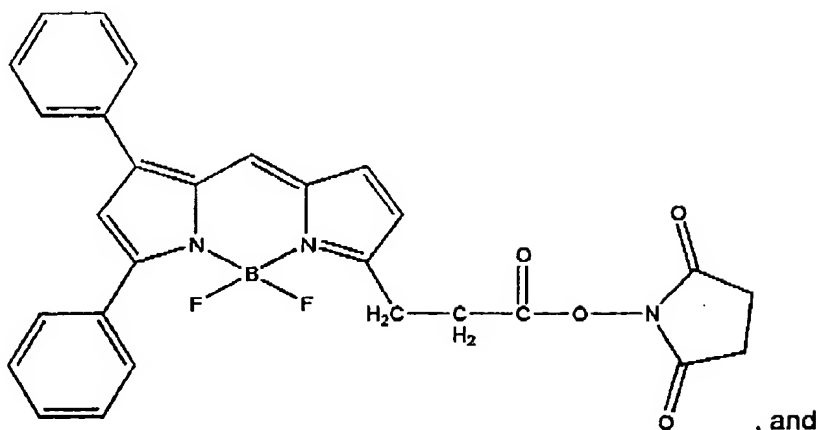
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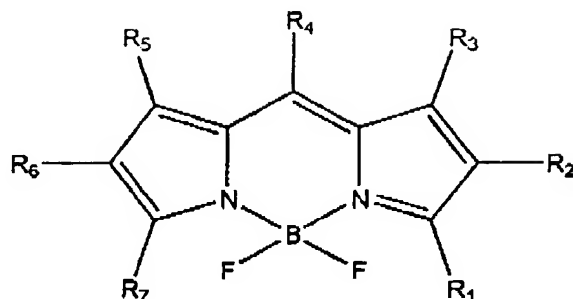


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73. (Currently Amended) A method of detecting immobilized poly(amino acids) comprising the steps of:
- separating poly(amino acids) by gel electrophoresis, resulting in separated poly (amino acids);
  - transferring said separated poly(amino acids) to a solid support, resulting in immobilized poly(amino acids) ;
  - combining said immobilized poly(amino acids) on said solid support with a labeling mixture that comprises one or more chemically reactive dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dyes of the formula:

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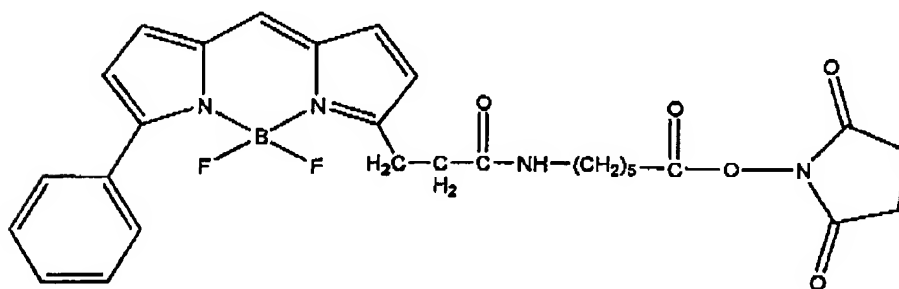
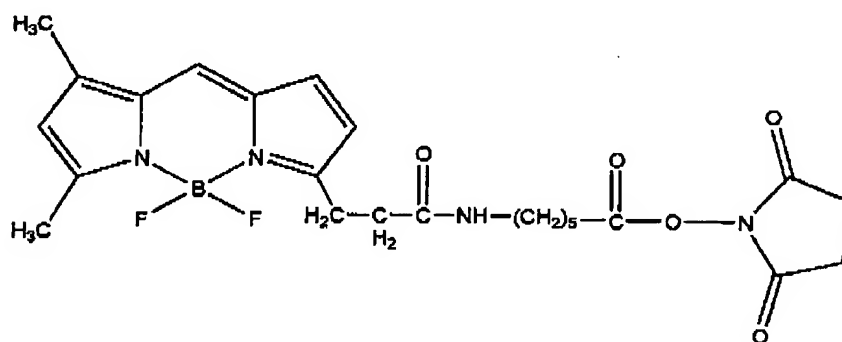
wherein each of R<sup>1</sup> through R<sup>7</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, ~~-L-Rx, maleimide, amino reactive group,~~ substituted or unsubstituted C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub> alkyl substituted or unsubstituted aryl, substituted or unsubstituted arylethenyl, substituted or unsubstituted arylbutadienyl, and substituted or unsubstituted heteroaryl;

wherein at least one of R<sup>1</sup> through R<sup>7</sup> is -L-Rx, wherein L is a spacer having 1-24 nonhydrogen atoms and Rx is a maleimide or a succinimidy ester of a carboxylic acid ~~an amino reactive group;~~

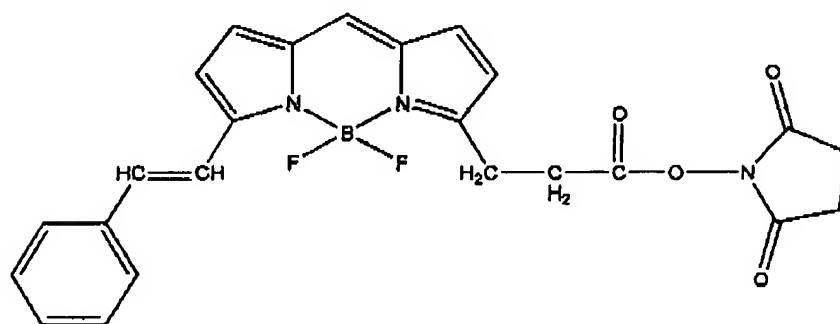
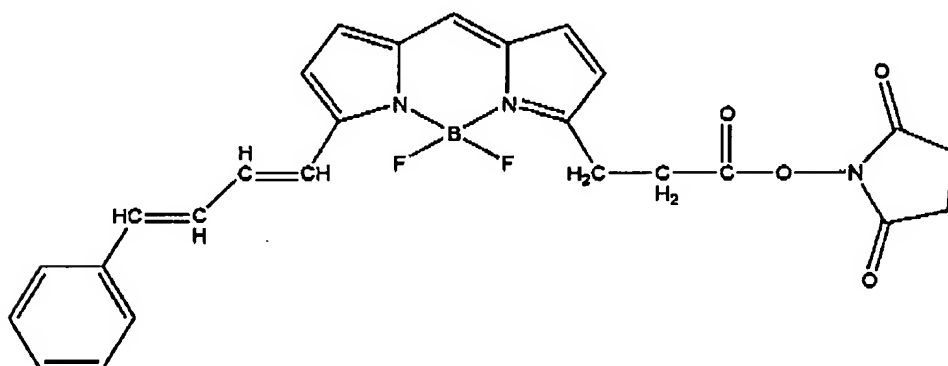
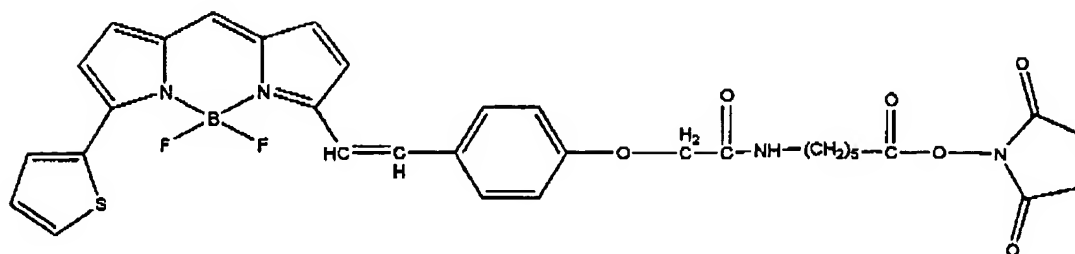
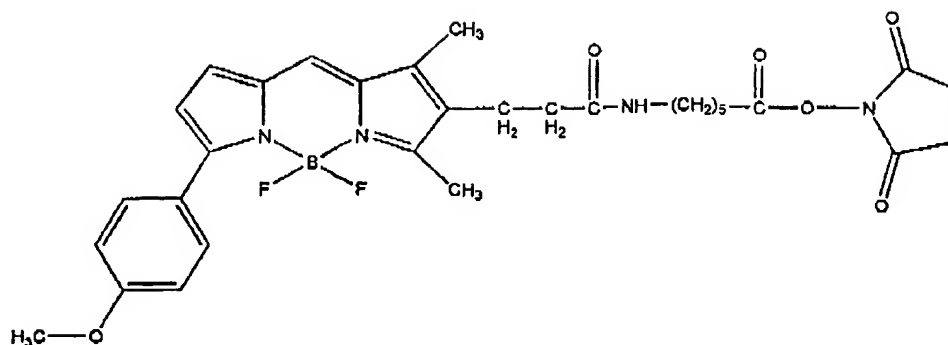
- d) incubating the immobilized poly(amino acids) in the labeling mixture for a sufficient time for the chemically reactive dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dyes to form a covalent bond with said poly(amino acids), resulting in labeled poly(amino acids);
  - e) removing unbound dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dyes;
  - f) illuminating said labeled poly(amino acids) to yield a fluorescent optical response to detect the corresponding labeled poly(amino acids).
74. (Previously Added) A method, as claimed in Claim 73, wherein said solid support is made of solvent-resistant materials that are selected from the group consisting of nylon, poly(vinylidene difluoride), glass, plastics, and their derivatives.
75. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim ~~[[74]]~~ 73, wherein said solid support is poly(vinylidene difluoride).

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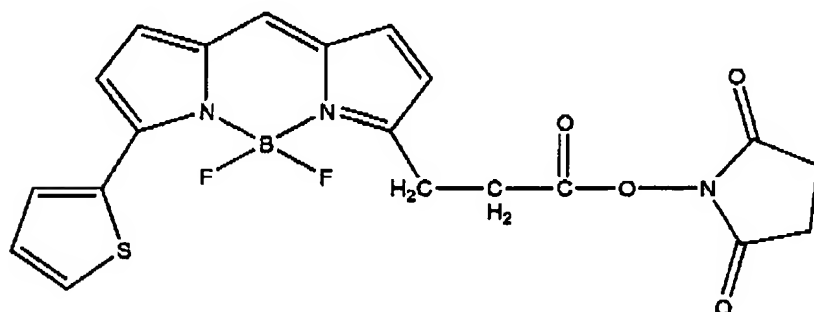
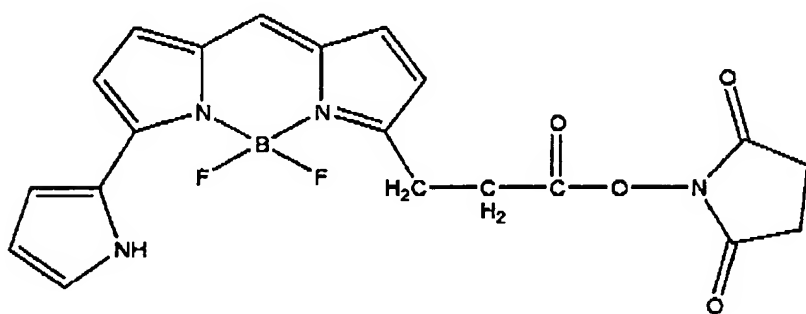
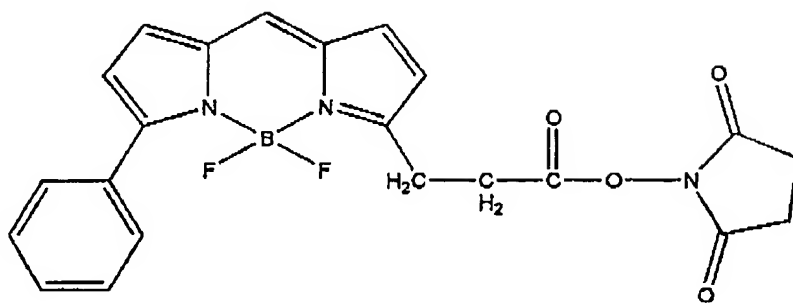
76. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim [[75]] 73, wherein said dipyrrometheneboron difluoride dye is present in the labeling mixture at a concentration of about 5 micromolar to about 20 micromolar.
77. (Previously Added) A method, as claimed in Claim [[76]] 73, further comprising adding a specific binding pair member that selectively binds to a target within said immobilized poly(amino acids) that is its complementary binding pair.
78. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim 77, where said specific binding pair member contains a label that is an enzyme, a ~~fluorophore~~ fluorophore or a hapten.
79. (Previously Added) A method, as claimed in Claim 77, further comprising: adding a secondary complementary binding pair member that contains a label and that selectively binds to the specific binding pair member.
80. (Currently Amended) A method, as claimed in Claim [[76]] 73, wherein said dye is selected from the group consisting of



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